



June 28, 2004

Environmental Protection Agency
EPA Docket Center
Attn: Docket ID No. OAR-2003-0056

VIA FAX 202-566-1741

Dear EPA:

I am writing about your proposed rules to regulate power plant emissions of mercury. Our Coalition works in the public policy arena to improve maternal and child health. We have followed this issue for several years and are very disappointed in your efforts to address this important cause of neurological disorders in babies. Your own analysis estimates that some 630,000 babies per year are born with mercury blood levels at or above the safety limit. Surely that number alone is sufficient to require immediate and direct attention to this problem.

In Louisiana, fishing is a way of life and pregnant women consume more fish than those in other parts of the US. We also have higher infant mortality than most other states. We have a very real reason to be concerned about mercury exposure. We urge you to withdraw your proposed regulations in favor of real protection. The name of your agency includes "Protection" and your new regulations should truly provide protection.

As you consider the cost to industry to clean up their practices, please balance that cost with the cost to families whose dreams of healthy children are shattered when their newborns have permanent neurological damage that will demand excessive medical intervention, special education, and long term care.

We need to put an end to mercury pollution and your proposed regulations will simply not accomplish that. Please start over and fix this problem.

Sincerely,

Sandra C. Adams
Executive Director